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By *ADAM FITZ-ADAM.*

To be continued every THURSDAY.

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Hoc novum eſt ancupium——
Poſtremo imperavi egomet mihi
Omnia aſſentari. Is quæſtus nunc eſt multo uberrimus,
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THAT an eſſay on HEARERS has not been given us by the writers of the laſt age, is to be accounted for from the ſame reaſons that the ancients have left us no treatiſe on tobacconiſts or ſugar-planters. The world is continually changing by the two great principles of revolution and diſcovery: as theſe produce novelty, they furniſh the baſis of our ſpeculations.

THE pride of our anceſtors diſtinguiſhed them from the vulgar, by the dignity of TACITURNITY. If we conſult old pictures, we ſhall find (ſuitable to the dreſs of the times) the beard cut, and the features compoſed

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to that gravity and ſolemnity of aſpect, which was to denote wiſdom and importance. In that admirable play of Ben Johnſon's, which, through the capacity and induſtry of it's reviver, has lately ſo well entertained the town, I mean, *Every man in his humour*, a country ſquire ſets up for high-breeding, by reſolving to be "proud, melancholy and gentleman-like." In the man of birth or buſineſs, SILENCE was the note of wiſdom and diſtinction; and the haughty peereſs then, would no more vouchſafe to talk to her equals, than ſhe will now to her inferiors.

IN thoſe times, when TALKING was the province only of the vulgar or hireling, fools and jeſters were the uſual retainers in great families; but now, ſo total is the revolution, voices are become a mere drug, and will fetch no money at all, except in the ſingle inſtance of an election. Riches, birth and honours aſſert their privileges by the oppoſite quality to SILENCE; inſomuch, that many of the great eſtates and manſion-houſes in this kingdom, ſeem at preſent to be held by the tenure of perpetual TALKING. Fools and jeſters muſt be uſeleſs in families where the maſter is no more aſhamed of expoſing his wit at his table to his gueſts and ſervants, than his drunkenneſs to his conſtituents. This revolution has obtained ſo generally all over Europe, that at this day a little dwarf of the king of Poland, who creeps out after dinner from under the trees of the deſſert, and utters impertinencies to every man at table, is talked of at other courts as a ſingularity.

HAPPY was it for the poor TALKERS of thoſe days that ſo great a revolution was brought about by degrees; for though I can conceive it eaſy enough to turn the writers at Conſtantinople into printers, and believe it poſſible

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to make a chimney-ſweeper a miller, a tallow chandler a perfumer, a gameſter a politician, a fine-lady a ſtock-jobber, or a block-head a connoiſſeur, I can have no idea of ſo great a metamorphoſis as that of a TALKER into a HEARER. That HEARERS, however, have ariſen in later times to anſwer in ſome degree the demand for them, is apparent from the numbers of them which are to be found in moſt families, under the various denominations of couſin, humble-companion, chaplain, led-captain, toad-eater &c. But though each of theſe characters frequently officiates in the poſt of HEARER, it will be a great miſtake if a HEARER ſhould imagine he may ever interefere in any of their departments. When the toad-eater opens in praiſe of muſty veniſon, or a greaſy ragout; when the led-captain and chaplain commend prickt-wine, or other liquors, ſuch as the French call Chaſſe-couſin, the HEARER muſt ſubmit to be poiſoned in ſilence. When the couſin is appealed to for the length of a fox chaſe, and out-lies his patron; when the ſquire of the fens declares he has no dirt near his houſe, and the couſin ſwears it is an hard gravel for five miles round; or when the hill-improver aſſerts that he never ſaw his turf burn before, and turning ſhort, ſays, "did You couſin"? In ſuch caſes as theſe the anſwers may give a dangerous example: for if a raw whelp of a HEARER ſhould happen to give his tongue, he will be rated and corrected like a puppy.

THE great duty therefore of this office is SILENCE; and I could prove the high antiquity of it by the Tyro's of the Pythagorean ſchool, and the ancient worſhip of Harpocrates, the tutelary deity of this ſect. Pythagoras bequeathed to his ſcholars that celebrated rule, which has never yet been rightly underſtood, "Worſhip, or ra-

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" ther, ſtudy the echo;" evidently intending thereby to inculcate that HEARERS ſhould obſerve that an echo never puts in a word till the SPEAKER comes to a pauſe. A great and comprehenſive leſſon! but being, perhaps, too conciſe for the inſtruction of vulgar minds, it may be neceſſary to deſcend more minutely into particular hints and cautions.

A HEARER muſt not be drowſy: for nothing perplexes a TALKER like the accident of ſleep in the midſt of his harangue: and I have known a French TALKER riſe up and hold open the eyelids of a Dutch HEARER with his finger and thumb.

HE muſt not ſquint: for no lover is ſo jealous as a true TALKER, who will be perpetually watching the motion of the eyes, and always ſuſpecting that the attention is directed to that ſide of the room to which they point.

A HEARER muſt not be a ſeer of ſights: he muſt let a hare paſs as quietly as an ox; and never interrupt narration by crying out at ſight of a highwayman or a mad-dog. An acquaintance of mine, who lived with a maiden aunt, loſt a good legacy by the ill-timed arrival of a coach and ſix, which he firſt diſcovered at the end of the avenue, and announced as a moſt acceptable hearing to the pride of the family: but it happened unluckily to be at the very time that the lady of the houſe was relating the critical moment of her life, when ſhe was in the greateſt danger of breaking her vow of celibacy.

A HEARER muſt not have a weak head; for though the TALKER may like he ſhould drink with him, he does not chuſe that he ſhould fall under the table till himſelf is ſpeechleſs.

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He muſt not be a news-monger; becauſe times paſt have already furniſhed the head of his patron with all the ideas he chuſes it ſhould be ſtored with.

Lastly and principally, a HEARER muſt not be a wit. I remember one of this profeſſion, being told by a gentleman, who to to do him juſtice was a very good ſeaman, that he had rode from Portſmouth to London in four hours, aſked, "if it was by Shrewſberry clock?" It happened the perſon ſo interrogated had not read Shakeſpear; which was the only reaſon I could aſſign why the adventurous queriſt was not immediately ſent aboard the Stygian tender.

But here we muſt obſerve that SILENCE, in the opinion of a TALKER, is not merely a ſuppreſſion of the action of the tongue; it is alſo neceſſary that every muſcle of the face and member of the body ſhould receive it's motion from no other ſenſation than that which the TALKER communicates through the ear.

A HEARER therefore muſt not have the fidgets: he muſt not ſtart if he hears a door clap, a gun go off, or a cry of murder. He muſt not ſniff with his noſtrils if he ſmell fire; becauſe, though he ſhould ſave the houſe by it, he will be as ill rewarded as Caſſandra for her endeavours to prevent the flames of Troy, or Gulliver for extinguiſhing thoſe of Lilliput.

There are many more hints which I ſhould be deſirous of communicating for the benefit of beginners, if I was not afraid of making my paper too long to be properly read and conſidered within the compaſs of a week, in which the greateſt part of every morning is neceſſarily dedicated to mercers, milliners, haircutters, voters, levees, lotteries, lounges, &c. I ſhall therefore ſay a word or two to the TALKERS and haſten to a concluſion.

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